

CLAIMS

1. A method for providing a storage area in a storage server for a portable data terminal connected over a network, said method comprising the steps of:

allocating a dedicated storage area for each user;
storing software, which is purchase-requested at a software sales site on the network by a user, into a dedicated storage area allocated to the user of the storage server without sending the software from the sales site directly to a portable data terminal of the user; and
making available the software, stored in the dedicated storage area in said storage server, to the user in response to a request from the user.

2. The method for providing a storage area according to claim 1, wherein an expiration date until which the user is allowed to use the software stored in said storage server is set, further comprising the step of making the software, which is in the dedicated storage area, unavailable to the user after the expiration date.

3. The method for providing a storage area according to claim 1, further comprising the step of charging the user for the purchase-requested software when the purchase-request is made, when the user downloads the software from the dedicated storage area, or when the user indicates an intention to continue to use after a trial period passes after the downloading.

4. The method for providing a storage area according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

storing software, which is not purchase-requested
5 by the user, into the dedicated storage area;

allowing the user to select the software not purchase-requested; and

charging the user for the software when the user downloads the selected software or when the user indicates
10 an intention to continue to use after a trial period.

5. A software sales method comprising the steps of:

providing purchasable software in a home page of
15 a sales site;

receiving a purchase-request from a user via the home page; and

20 sending the purchase-requested software or identification information associated therewith to a site of a storage server that has a dedicated storage area allocated to the user space sending the purchase-requested software directly to the user,

wherein the software is stored into the dedicated storage area of the user of said storage server.

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6. The software sales method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of charging the user for the purchase-requested software when the purchase-request is made, when the user downloads the software from the

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dedicated storage area, or when the user indicates an intention to continue to use after a trial period.

7. A software sales method comprising the steps
5 of:

storing software, which is not purchase-requested by a user of a portable data terminal, into a dedicated storage area in a storage server, said dedicated storage area being allocated to the user;

10 allowing the user to select the software not purchase-requested; and

charging the user for the software when the user downloads the selected software or when the user indicates an intention to continue to use after a trial period.

15 8. A storage server connected to portable data terminals over a network, said storage server comprising:

a storage unit having dedicated storage areas, each allocated to a user of a portable data terminal;

20 means for receiving software, which is purchase-requested by the user of said portable data terminal, from a software sales site on the network for storing the software into the dedicated storage area of the user;

25 a management table storing therein management information about the software stored in the dedicated storage area of the user; and

means for referencing said management table in response to access from the user and for sending the

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software, which is stored in the dedicated storage areas of the user, to the portable data terminal of the user.

9. The storage server according to claim 6,
5 wherein said storage unit further comprises a common storage area in which an application program body is stored as the software for common use by a plurality of users and wherein data associated with the application program and corresponding to each user is stored separately in the
10 dedicated storage area of the user.

10. A portable data terminal with a network connection capability, comprising:

local storage into which required software is
15 downloaded from full-set software as required, said full-set software being stored in a dedicated storage area allocated on a storage unit on a network; and

a management table in which management information associated with the software stored in the local storage
20 is stored,

wherein the management information includes at least expiration date information on the software,

said portable data terminal further comprising means for automatically erasing the software from said
25 local storage when an expiration date defined by the expiration date information has passed.

11. The portable data terminal according to claim 10, wherein means for allowing the user to rewrite said

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management table freely is not provided.

12. A recording medium storing therein a computer program that runs on a portable data terminal with a network connection capability, said computer program comprising:

a function that downloads required software from full-set software into local storage as required, said full-set software being stored in a dedicated storage area allocated on a storage unit on a network;

a function that manages expiration date information that is set for the software stored in the local storage; and

a function that automatically erases the software from said local storage when the expiration date defined by the expiration date information has passed.

13. A computer program that runs on a portable data terminal with a network connection capability, said computer program comprising:

a function that downloads required software from full-set software into local storage as required, said full-set software being stored in a dedicated storage area allocated on a storage unit on a network;

a function that manages expiration date information that is set for the software stored in the local storage; and

a function that automatically erases the software from said local storage when the expiration date defined by the expiration date information has passed.

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